

Charlene, stepdaughter Dawnielle, brothers Samuel and James, grandsons Kennie Hobbs, Jr., and Mark Jones, Jr., and granddaughters Danielle Mike; Jessica, Amber and Mallory Lloyd.

IN REMEMBRANCE OF THREE HEROES; JOHN PITTMAN, LYNN ETHERIDGE, AND CHARLES ATTEBERRY

HON. KEN BENTSEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 22, 1999

Mr. BENTSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor three Texans, Mr. John Pittman, Ms. Lynn Etheridge, and Mr. Charles Atteberry who were tragically killed in a helicopter crash while en route to pick up a patient as part of the world renowned Hermann Life Flight program. Their helicopter crashed in eastern Fort Bend County this past Saturday, July 17, 1999. It was the first fatal accident for Hermann Life Flight program since its inception in 1976.

Mr. John Pittman, 58, was an accomplished pilot who worked on Hermann Life Flight for much of his career. Ms. Lynn Etheridge, 35, was flight nurse who provided quality emergency care services to injured persons. Mr. Charles "Mac" Atteberry, 32, was a dedicated paramedic who provided cutting-edge medical services to trauma care victims. All three were veteran Memorial Hermann Hospital System employees. Mr. Pittman had flown for more than 30 years, including 10 years as Life Flight pilot.

Hermann Life Flight is one of the most advanced emergency care helicopters in existence. Hermann Life Flight has logged more than one million air miles and flown more than 60,000 missions. This service is available 24 hours a day through the dedicated work of its 14 pilots, 13 flight nurses, 12 paramedics, 20 communications specialist and 6 mechanics. The Hermann Life Flight program includes three helicopters that provide emergency care services within 150 mile radius throughout Texas and western Louisiana. The cost of providing this service is more than \$3 million annually which is solely funded through community and fundraising efforts. The Hermann Life Flight program provides advanced emergency life support equipment, including cardiac monitors and defibrillators, temporary pacemakers, oxygen and materials for immobilization and isolettes for newborns.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me in honoring their service to the community and in expressing my condolences to the families of Mr. Pittman, Ms. Etheridge, and Mr. Atteberry.

The Greek Poet Homer once wrote that "life and death are balanced on the edge of a razor." Their mission, indeed their job, to provide medical care to those with the greatest need was simple, but always with risk. They saved lives while balancing their own on the edge of a razor. Yet, they did this day in and day out. I know that John, Lynn and "Mac" were deeply committed to the services they provided to the greater Houston community. All Texans can be proud of the services they provided and the sacrifices they made. They will be missed.

A private memorial service for the emergency medical service community will be held at 3 p.m. Sunday at First United Methodist Church—Westchase Campus. A public memorial will be held at Rice Stadium at 7:30 p.m.

RECOGNIZING THE ST. ANTHONY OF PADUA PARISH'S FORTY YEARS OF SERVICE TO ITS PRIEST AND PARISHIONERS

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 22, 1999

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor the fortieth anniversary of the first mass of the Saint Anthony of Padua Parish, first formed by the Archbishop Edward H. Hoban on March 6, 1959.

The parish has come a long way from the first mass held in the Parmadale Orphanage on July 12, 1959 by the parish's founding pastor, Fr. Jeremy Fischer. It quickly became an integral part of the community and within a few months it had more than a thousand families registered and a very successful campaign to begin construction on its own building. On January 29, 1961 the new building, including a gym and school, was dedicated and served as the parish's home for twenty years until the continuously growing parish of over 3400 families required a new home.

Under the guidance of the first principal, Mr. Frank Kuhar, the parish has dedicated itself to the education of our youth and to providing them a solid foundation from which they can progress to become God-fearing leaders of the community and a source of guidance and inspiration to the next generation.

On Sunday, July 11, 1999, at noon, Most Reverend A. Edward Pevec, Archbishop of Cleveland, will preside over mass at the parish which his predecessor had founded almost exactly forty years earlier. It will be followed by a reception in the school hall and a banquet and dance later in the evening.

My fellow colleagues, please join me in recognizing the St. Anthony of Padua Parish's forty years of service and the dedication of its priests and parishioners to fostering the spiritual health and community life of its congregation.

ON THE RETIREMENT OF MR. ROBERT M. TOBIAS

HON. JAMES P. MORAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 22, 1999

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to come to floor today to recognize the tremendous career of Bob Tobias, longtime friend and advocate to federal employees everywhere.

In August, Bob will not be seeking reelection for a fifth term as President of the National Treasury Employees Union (NTEU), an organization which represents more than 155,000 employees in 20 federal agencies and departments. During his 31 years with the NTEU, including 16 as President, he has turned it into one of the most effective voices federal employees have ever had.

Bob and I have worked together since I was first elected to Congress in 1990. Bob was extremely helpful in advising me on the complex legislation to promote fair and equitable compensation and benefits for our civil servants.

Bob earned his law degree from the George Washington University School of Law, based right here in DC. He then went on to use litigation as a tool to advance the interests of federal employees across America. Bob has led several landmark legal victories, including a successful half-billion dollar back pay suit against President Nixon, a federal court victory that gave federal workers the right to engage in informational picketing, and a Supreme Court win that overturned the ban on speaking and writing honoraria.

In fact, Bob has been involved in every major piece of legislation impacting federal employees during the last 20 years. These include the development of FERS, protecting the FEHBP, the restructuring of the IRS, and enacting the Federal Employee Pay Comparability Act. He has also been tireless in promoting the idea that partnership can make the workplace better for federal employees, providing a more efficient service to the American taxpayer. Bob also led the fight to restore political freedom to federal employees in pushing for reform of the Hatch Act.

Bob is now focusing on different priorities; a second career as a teacher and writer on public policy issues beckons, where he will be able to educate a new generation.

I have enjoyed working with you Bob, and look forward to continuing to work with you on issues that are so important to working families. I wish you the best of luck.

AMERICAN EMBASSY SECURITY ACT OF 1999

SPEECH OF

HON. JOHN EDWARD PORTER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 21, 1999

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2415) to enhance security of United States missions and personnel overseas, to authorize appropriations for the Department of State for fiscal year 2000, and for other purposes.**HD***Supp for H.R. 2415 and for Radio Free Asia

Mr. PORTER. Mr. Chairman, I rise today to support the authorizing committee in their commitment to fully authorize Radio Free Asia at \$30,000,000 and to lift the sunset provision of Radio Free Asia.

I have had a longstanding interest in U.S. international broadcasting and I am proud and delighted that Radio Free Asia is running so strongly and delivering accurate and timely news to those who would not otherwise receive it. In its fourth year of existence, RFA has been able to expand its service to provide information in nine languages to listeners in Asia who do not have access to full and free news media reaching countless people living in China, Tibet, Burma, Vietnam, North Korea, Laos and Cambodia.

I want to congratulate the Chairman and the committee on lifting the sunset on Radio Free Asia and call on the other body do to the

same. RFA is the only U.S. international broadcaster to have a sunset provision. It is time to bring RFA in line with the rest of the international broadcasters.

As we continue to fight communism, dictatorships and human rights abusers in Asia, it is important democracy, freedom and the truth have a voice. RFA provides that voice.

This year the U.S. suffered first hand from the lack of free press in China in the wake of the Embassy bombing in Belgrade. RFA was one of the few news broadcasts to reach the Chinese people that provided the truth following the incident. And according to RFA call-in shows following the bombing, over half of the callers were critical of the way the Chinese government handled the situation. RFA also broadcasted a special series this summer commemorating the 10th Anniversary of the Tiananmen Square Crackdown and providing a voice for family members to remember their loved ones.

China is not the only country where Radio Free Asia is reaching out to people. In Burma, Radio Free Asia regularly interviews Aung San Suu Kyi, keeping the hope of her party alive. A series was also conducted this year on AIDS in the country which included medical information about the disease. In Korean, stories ran on North Koreans defecting to China due to its famine and on the South Korean/North Korean engagement policy.

In several of these repressive countries with closed or weak media institutions, the Chinese government—through the Xinhua News Agency and other means—has an impact on the way events are reported within the country. RFA provides an important counterweight to this creeping influence.

As these countries struggle with democracy, human rights and freedom, the importance of independent media sources cannot be underestimated. Governments are less likely to commit abuses if Radio Free Asia is shining light on their injustices while promoting democracy and U.S. interests. I am proud Radio Free Asia is available to provide this service. I look forward to its continued and expanded service to create an even greater audience to bring democracy and freedom to Asia.

MINIMUM WAGE IN VERMONT; NATIONAL HEALTH CARE SYSTEM; PEER COUNSELING

HON. BERNARD SANDERS

OF VERMONT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 22, 1999

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to have printed in the RECORD statements by high school students from my home State of Vermont, who were speaking at my recent town meeting on issues facing young people today. I am asking that you please insert these statements in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD as I believe that the views of these young persons will benefit my colleagues.

MINIMUM WAGE IN VERMONT

(On behalf of Brandi Russin, Tonya Boutin and Nicole King)

Brandi Russin: We are here to talk about the minimum wage in Vermont. We feel that it is a little bit low for the price. The living expenses in Vermont are very high compared to the minimum wage.

Tonya Boutin: I feel that with the life that we are living now, that the expenses are very high, and the minimum wage is not enough. We have got car payments to pay, we have gas, we have other things that we need to spend our money on, and with the minimum wage, it is not enough. If you think about all the stuff—

Brandi Russin: I don't know if you are interested. We brought some forms along for you to look at. Right here, I have pay stubs from a job when I was earning regular minimum wage, and this is the net amount. We just want to note the small amounts on these checks. And we have all noticed, at the jobs when we've been getting paid minimum wage, you get like a \$60 to an \$80 check per week, and you are like, Oh, you know, I can just spend this here, spend this here, and you tend not to save as much money. And as we grow up a little, we know we have a lot to save for. And this is also another job where it is more than minimum wage, and, on the bottom, you can see the amounts are much larger. And with amounts like this, you think, Wow, you know, maybe I should be setting some of this aside for something.

We would like you just to see that. And we also made some forms up on some expenses that teenagers do have in their lifetime. And \$5.25 is not adequate, we feel, along with most other teenagers.

We also made up a little tiny fact sheet saying that, if you want to see a movie on minimum wage, the movie price is \$7.50 to get into a movie. So if you want to go to see a movie, you have to work for an hour and a half at your job to see one movie. And a lot of teenagers like to wear Levi jeans, and those cost—we did an estimate of \$45. If you want to go buy a pair of jeans for yourself, you have to work nine hours for a pair of jeans.

Congressman Sanders: Anyone else that wanted to add anything?

Nicole King: When I started working, I started my first job last June, once I got out of school. I was making \$5.50 at that job, but I didn't feel I was making enough to make care payments, car insurance, and my other living expenses, so I started working a second job. And between the two of those, I was working between 50 and 65 hours a week. And I could only do that for about a month and a half, and I had to quit my first job because I was getting more hours at my second job.

Congressman Sanders: Tonya, did you have anything to add to that?

Tonya Boutin: I was working at a job that was paying minimum wage, and I found that, the more hours I got was better, but my paychecks weren't satisfying. You know, I just—I worked hard to get the money that I earned, and the paycheck that I was getting just didn't satisfy me. And to try to save up money is very hard, because you only get a certain amount, and, you know, you pay your bills and what you need to do, and you only like 20 bucks at the end, and it is not enough.

Brandi Russin: As both of these, I was working two jobs also. I was working over 70 hours a week, and finally I said to myself, I can't keep doing this. And when you become a senior in high school, you realize all the college expenses coming up, and you say, Wow, where am I going to get the money from? So you start doing what we did, and panic, and you start working 50 to 70 hours a week, and you say, Where am I going to get all the money from? And you have to say no to yourself, you have to say, I need to stop and realize what I am doing to myself, and I am not getting enough sleep, and I am just going to keep working, keep working for this money.

NATIONAL HEALTH CARE SYSTEM

(On behalf of Zarina Williams and Melanie Campo)

ZARINA WILLIAMS: The United States should have a national health care system. Nationally, Americans spent \$1.2 trillion on health care in 1998, and the amount is increasing each year. Thirty-seven million out of 270 million people in America do not receive adequate health care. Many Americans cannot afford private medical insurance, but do not qualify for Medicaid or Medicare. Some people who have private insurance have to do without treatment because they cannot afford the deductible.

There are other countries that have national health care. France has a national health care system, where the government reimburses 85 percent of medical costs, and you have your choice of doctors and dentists. Germany also has a national health care system, where the government pays for unemployed welfare recipients and employed people up to a certain income. People who earn high income take out private insurance, because the government does not pay for the health care. Most hospitals in Germany are run by states and municipalities, not privately owned.

Melanie Campo: In the United States, government should provide national health care. Financial means should not determine the quality of the medical services a citizen receives. If we had a national health care system, people would want to become doctors to help people, not for the money. Almost every industrialized country provides partial health care coverage for its citizens. Why shouldn't America?

A plan proposed in Massachusetts would eliminate four-fifths of the out-of-pocket health costs. Funds for this plan could come from savings in administrative costs of the system, money from the federal government, and money employers and employees now contribute to health insurance premiums. Additional money would be generated through new taxes of 1.5 percent on income and 1 percent on payroll. With this plan, everyone would receive the same coverage. This plan would negotiate drug prices and regulate medical costs.

PEER COUNSELING

(On behalf of Lee Knight, Anna Tornello and Gigi Craig)

Anna Tornello: We have changed our topic to peer counseling at Colchester High School.

In the past several months, there have been bomb threats, weapon threats, and many unfortunate deaths. When we were on vacation, the Littleton, Colorado, incident happened, and when we came back to school, we were all really scared.

Lee Knight: And that is why we want to start a peer counseling group. It's because we don't want the same tragedy that happened at Columbine High School to happen here. One of the reasons why students turn to violence was because of the way that the society looked at them. Kids and students should not be judged by the way they dress. It doesn't matter what they look like; it is who they are on the inside. It is just like philosopher John Locke said: People are not born good or evil, but they are shaped by their surroundings. In which, in our case, our surroundings are the society that we live in. And we want to stop criticism that happens in schools all around the nation.

Anna Tornello: As we know, not one student can save a whole school from the same kind of tragedy that happened at Columbine High School. And students have guidance counselors at the school, but most students